

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER
LISTED

DEC 30 2009

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Transue Brothers Blacksmith & Wagon Shop

other names/site number 117-251

2. Location

street & number 309 Main Street

☐ not for publication

city or town Summerfield

☐ vicinity

state Kansas code KS county Marshall code 117 zip code 66541

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☒ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Patricia Selmer
Signature of certifying official/Title

11-18-09
Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Kansas Historical Society

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined eligible for the
National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register

☐ removed from the National
Register.

☐ other,

(explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Transue Brothers Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Name of Property

Marshall County, Kansas
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

Contributing

Noncontributing

3

buildings
sites
structures
objects
Total

3

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE: Specialty Store

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN
MOVEMENTS: Commercial Style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone: Limestone

walls Stone: Limestone; Brick

roof Asphalt

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Transue Brothers Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Name of Property

Marshall County, Kansas
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations N/A

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ **B** removed from its original location.

☐ **C** a birthplace or grave

☐ **D** a cemetery.

☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ **F** a commemorative property

☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Architecture

Period of Significance

1898 - 1959

Significant Dates

1898 (built); 1904 (Farrier's Shop);

1914 (electricity installed)

Significant Person

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Transue brothers, Harry Sellers and local mason

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

☐ previously listed in the National Register

☐ Previously determined eligible by the National Register

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark

☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State Agency

☐ Federal Agency

☐ Local Government

☐ University

☐ Other

Name of repository:

Kansas Historical Society

Transue Brothers Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Name of Property

Marshall County, Kansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 14 726360 4430700
Zone Easting Northing
2 _____

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing
4 _____
☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Zahm (co-owner) & Rick Anderson (KSHS Staff)
organization _____ date April 24, 2009
street & number 30864 SW 89 Road telephone 402-520-0644
city or town Beatrice state NE zip code 68310

Additional Documentation

submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO) or FPO for any additional items

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name David R. and Elizabeth Zahm
street & number 30864 SW 89 Road telephone 402-520-0644
city or town Beatrice state NE zip code 68310

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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Summerfield, Marshall County, Kansas

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

Summary

The Transue Brothers Blacksmith & Wagon Shop (1898) is located at 309 Main Street in Summerfield, Kansas (population 211 in 2000). Summerfield is in the northeast corner of Marshall County and shares its northern boundary with the Nebraska state line. The blacksmith shop is at the north end of the small downtown on the west side of the street across from the community center and fire department. The one-part commercial block building measures 24 feet by 80 feet and is constructed of limestone with a brick veneer. The 18-inch limestone blocks used in the construction of the shop were quarried from two area quarries. The building shares its south wall with the adjoining two-story building that had once been a dentist's office and is currently a bar. The north wall is shared with the one-story farrier's shop, which was constructed in 1904. The roof is flat with a parapet.

Exterior

East (Front) Elevation

The primary street elevation faces east and consists of a central entrance flanked by fixed-sash wood windows. The entrance includes the original wood double doors each five feet wide that slide sideways on an interior track. There is an eight-light, fixed-sash wood transom above the entrance. The flanking windows include two stacked eight-light, fixed-sash wood windows on each side. The windowpanes were originally clear glass, but broken panes have been replaced with Plexiglas that has changed color with age. Twenty-four of the original forty panes of glass have been covered to protect them in their fragile condition. Above the storefront, the elevation extends several feet forming a brick parapet with limestone detailing. There is a limestone date stone in the center near the top of the building that reads "1898". An anvil made of stone has recently been re-installed atop the parapet as it originally was.

West (Rear) Elevation

The rear elevation is limestone and features a central entrance flanked by multi-pane wood windows much like the front entrance. The entrance includes the original wood double doors that slide sideways on an interior track. The wood transom above the doors includes three nine-light, fixed wood sashes. The top third of each sash is divided from the bottom six lights by a muntin. The flanking windows are double-hung wood windows, but are currently boarded. They feature limestone lintels and sills.

North and South (side) Elevations

Both north and south sides of the building share a wall with the adjoining buildings. The blacksmith shop does extend further back on the lot than the two flanking buildings. These side elevation walls are made of limestone blocks. Each side elevation has one four-over-four, double-hung wood window located near the rear of the building.

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Summerfield, Marshall County, Kansas*Interior*

The building contains one large open interior space. The front and rear entrances are centered and aligned in such a manner to allow a horse-drawn wagon to enter and exit on either end. The building originally featured two coal-burning forges built along the south wall for the purpose of heating and bending metal. A third forge was added and later removed. Although many other blacksmith shops had dirt floors, the floor of this shop is constructed of two-inch wood planks. A well located at the northwest corner inside the blacksmith shop was dug in July of 1898.¹ It serviced not only the blacksmith shop, but local residents would stop by for a good, cool refreshing drink of water. The local café may have also looked to the blacksmith shop for water.²

The two extant forges are constructed of stone, brick, and mortar. Workbenches and tools consist of two anvils, a post vise, and hand tools such as tongs, hammers, cut-off shears, and metal benders. The extant over-head line shaft supplied power to the following power tools that still exist in the building: a Boss trip hammer, band saw, jointer, spoke lathe, post drill. An eight-horsepower, single-cylinder, hit-and-miss engine supplied power to the equipment through the line shaft. The engine was installed during the time the building was being finished in the fall of 1898.³

The ceiling is full-height and is clad with wood lath. It appears that the ceiling was once plastered, but no plaster remains. The side walls, however, retain plaster and are filled with many hanging tools and machines.

Supplies found in the shop include wagon wheels, wagon parts, wagon spokes, felloes, buggy single trees, single tree clips, double trees, yokes, neck yokes, wagon neck yoke rings, pole caps, and bolster woods. There are rings on the walls for securing horses during shoeing. The large quarry bar that was used to remove the limestone from the quarry is found there as well. Ledgers of the business show by receipts that blacksmith labor was provided for shoeing horses, repairing wagons and farm equipment, automobile repair, and also for the railroad.

Related Buildings

Farrier's Shop (1904)

The farrier's shop has its own storefront separate from the blacksmith shop. The building is twenty-three by forty feet and is constructed with sheet iron over a wood frame. The front elevation is similar to that of the adjacent blacksmith shop in that it features a central entrance flanked by fixed-sash, multi-light wood windows. The entrance includes the original wood double doors that slide sideways on an interior track.

¹ The *Summerfield Sun*. July 15, 1898 references the well.

² Robeson, Dale "Tinker". *The Blacksmith Shop; Summerfield, Kansas*. Manuscript. May 1, 1969. On file at KSHS archives. Call #: 978.1 - M35 Pam. V. 2. No. 2.

³ A 1901 Sanborn map shows a gasoline engine. The 1911 map shows an eight-horsepower engine and a thirty-gallon underground fuel storage tank to be on the property of the blacksmith shop. The *Summerfield Sun* references the gas engine in the October 21, 1898 p. 5 article describing the new blacksmith shop.

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Summerfield, Marshall County, KansasSection number 7 Page 3

There is a three-light, fixed-sash wood transom above the entrance. The flanking storefront windows include one large nine-light, fixed-sash wood window on each side. The windows are boarded, but the sliding door is exposed. Above and below the windows, the building features historic pressed metal siding with the appearance of brick.

This is the northernmost building on the block and, therefore, the north (side) elevation is exposed and visible. The north elevation contains no windows or doors and is clad with vertical strips of ribbed metal. The roof, also covered with metal, is a shed roof that slopes from south to north. The west (rear) elevation includes a central entrance with the original wood double doors that slide sideways on an interior track. The wood transom above the doors includes three two-light, fixed wood sashes.

The interior is similar to that of the adjacent blacksmith shop. It features one large open space, has a wood floor constructed of two-inch planks, and contains a centered entrance on the front and rear of the building. The entrances could accommodate horse-drawn wagons or early automobiles. The south wall is exposed limestone. The north interior wall and ceiling are clad with bead board. Faintly painted on the north interior wall is the price of shoeing horses that reads: "*Shoes ea. .05 - Labor 1.00*". The shop still contains horseshoes, nails and a forge. Rings are found along the north wall for securing the horses during the shoeing process. Early in the building's history, a four or five foot pit was dug beneath the floor to accommodate automobile repairs. Access to the pit is at the west end of the building near the rear doorway.

Coal Shed (ca. prior to 1911)

The metal-clad, wood-frame coal shed situated at the west property line behind the blacksmith shop consists of a fourteen-foot frontage with a gable roof. The building's exterior is covered with tin and features no ornamentation. There is one tin-clad door and one small six-light window on the east elevation. On the west elevation (facing the alley) there is a door for receiving coal deliveries. This side of the building's dimensions is fourteen feet wide by thirty feet in height. The east end of the building was used for storage. The interior has a staircase leading to more storage above or for also viewing the level of coal in the bin below. A lean-to addition was built onto the north elevation at an unknown date sometime before 1926. This lean-to is collapsing.⁴

⁴ A 1926 Sanborn map shows the presence of the lean-to adjoining the north elevation.

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Summerfield, Marshall County, Kansas

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Transue Brothers Blacksmith & Wagon Shop is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the early commercial development of Summerfield and Criterion C as a highly intact late nineteenth century Commercial-style building. The nominated property includes three functionally related buildings that were erected between 1898 and 1911: the blacksmith and wagon shop, the farrier's shop, and the coal shed. The period of significance for this property begins with the construction of the blacksmith shop in 1898 and extends to 1959. The property is nominated as an early and rare example of a thriving blacksmith and wagon business that adapted to changing technology and successfully incorporated early automobile repair technology to meet consumer needs.

When the shop closed its doors in the late twentieth century, it had been one of the longest-operating businesses in Summerfield and Marshall County, having been owned by just four different blacksmiths. All three buildings included in this nomination remain highly intact from the period of significance. The interior and exterior of the building remain largely unchanged.

History

The earliest Euro-American settlers arrived in Marshall County 1855, and communities established before and after the Civil War. Summerfield was founded in 1889 as the Kansas City Wyandotte & Northwestern Railroad came through the area linking Kansas City, Kansas to Virginia, Nebraska. Elias Summerfield, the town's namesake, was Chief Operations Manager of the railroad at the time. The K.C.W & N.W.R.R later became part of the Missouri Pacific System.

Thomas Hutton opened the community's first blacksmith shop in 1889. He sold the business to brothers James and George Transue Brothers in 1893. The Transue brothers were born in Washington County to Mr. and Mrs. Snowden Transue. James was born at Hanover in 1866 and George at Washington in 1871. Both brothers apprenticed and worked in the blacksmith trade before locating to Summerfield prior to 1894. James worked in Summerfield for Thomas Hutton for three years before purchasing the blacksmith shop with his brother George. George had worked the previous three years for F. S. Biberstein in Home City, Marshall County, Kansas. The brothers joined together to purchase Hutton's business in 1893.⁵

The Transue brothers had the building constructed of stone in response local concerns about fire danger and a new city ordinance that required downtown buildings to be built of fireproof materials.⁶ Similar to other Kansas communities of the late nineteenth century, Summerfield experienced fires that destroyed several buildings. One fire in particular that occurred on June 29, 1894 was noted to have prompted more permanent fireproof construction to prevent further fire-related disaster. The headline in the July 6, 1894 edition of the

⁵ *Summerfield Sun*, Oct. 16, 1903. pg. 6.

⁶ *The History of Summerfield*, pp. 9-10. Summerfield's "Great Fire" occurred on June 29, 1894 when five businesses were destroyed. A city ordinance was enacted to construct larger and more substantial buildings of fireproof materials.

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Transue Brothers Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Summerfield, Marshall County, Kansas

Summerfield Sun, stated, "Summerfield visited by a \$25,000 blaze. Nothing left but the foundations to mark the spot where once stood five of our largest business firms."

During fire, an uncompleted stone building's walls separated the consuming flames from the remainder of the town's businesses and homes on the west side of Main Street. The fire did not jump the two walls, and Hutton's one-and-a-half story, wood-frame blacksmith shop was spared from the fire.⁷ James Transue had been working as an apprentice under Hutton at the time. Construction of the new stone and brick blacksmith shop began in 1898 after the Transue brothers had purchased Hutton's business.

Rather than constructing wood-frame buildings, the city required the use of fireproof materials, such as limestone and brick, for the construction of buildings in certain blocks considered 'fire zones'. Limestone was readily available just a few miles from town. By the end of June in 1898, Harry Sellers had begun constructing the new blacksmith shop. He was unable to finish because of health concerns in August.⁸ During August, September and part of October of 1898, the Transue brothers worked out of the C. Usher blacksmith shop, also on Main Street in Summerfield, until their building was completed.⁹

The *Summerfield Sun* reported the completion and re-opening of the Transue Brothers Blacksmith and Wagon Shop:

The Transue Bros. new shop is about completed and we congratulate them on having the finest shop in northeastern Kansas. It is built of stone with brick trimmings in front and covered with an iron roof.¹⁰ It is 80 feet deep outside and 21 feet in the clear and 14 feet high ceiling and has a good plank floor. With two excellent forges, a gasoline engine and other suitable equipments they are now better prepared to serve their many patrons. They have, by their industry, skilled and close attention to business, built up a good trade and they will no doubt continue to receive, as they merit, a good share of public custom. Their improvements have cost them about \$1,200 and are a credit to themselves and the city. Hereafter they will be found at their old stand in their new shop ready to serve to the best of their ability.¹¹

The next week's Friday edition of the local newspaper carried the first notice that the Transue Brothers were in business in their new building: "We will be found at our new shop hereafter where we will be pleased to see all who may favor us with their work. We are now better prepared to serve you. Transue Bros."¹²

⁷ Dale "Tinker" Roberson, *The Blacksmith Shop: Summerfield, Kansas*. Manuscript. May 1, 1969. On file at KSHS archives. Call #: 978.1 - M35 Pam. V. 2. No. 2.

⁸ *Summerfield Sun*. July 1, 1898 p. 5 and August 5, 1898 p. 5.

⁹ *Summerfield Sun*. August 5, 1898 p. 5.

¹⁰ The reference to an iron roof is also similar to the mentioning of the sheet iron for the farrier's shop construction in 1904. In addition, the coal shed is currently covered in this same material. The blacksmith shop roof was replaced in 1903. Today this type of material, although thinner and lighter, would be referred to as corrugated steel or tin.

¹¹ *Summerfield Sun*. October 21, 1898 p. 5.

¹² *Summerfield Sun*. October 28, 1898 p. 5.

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Transue Brothers Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Summerfield, Marshall County, Kansas

Their new building included a gasoline engine to power the equipment, which they used even after the introduction of electricity to Summerfield in 1914. A gasoline engine and the equipment driveline mechanisms are still extant in the building as is the original electrical wiring. A 1903 local newspaper article described the equipment in the building:

Among the machinery in this establishment may be seen a Boss trip hammer weighing 1300 lbs., a Scow disc sharpener which rolls the disks out cold sharpening them in the correct manner and saving the material and making them last much longer, a new shoe stock machine, a circular band saw, and many others. All the machinery together with a power bellows attachment for the three forges are furnished motive power by an eight-horse Witte gasoline engine.¹³

With their new building, the Transue Brothers were able to provide a variety of services to the community that included horseshoeing, building and repairing wagons and sleighs,¹⁴ and iron fabrication, and likely included many other services typical of early twentieth-century blacksmiths such as machine construction and maintenance, repairing household utensils, sharpening knives and blades, fixing pots and pans, sewing machines, garden hoes, buckles, suspender hooks, and buttons. As with rural farming communities across Kansas, this shop provided valuable services to farmers and businesses from the community's early days through the mid-twentieth century.¹⁵

The business was successful enough to warrant upgrades and expansions just a few years after the building's construction. The local newspaper reported that improvements to the shop occurred in late 1903 in the form of a new roof, a larger circular band saw, and having interior ceiling plastered.¹⁶ A trend toward cold steel shaping disc blades and rubber being used during wheel repairs is evident in the Transue brothers' newspaper advertisements in the local newspaper. Regarding the cold sharpening of disc blades, the following was printed in the *Summerfield Sun*:

A disc cold rolled will stay sharp three times as long as one shaved sharp. Bring yours to Transue Bros. Now is the time to have that disc cold rolled sharp at Transue Bros. Bring in your discs before the rush and have them cold rolled sharp at Transue Bros.¹⁷

(Another similar note had appeared a year earlier in the February 26, 1904 on the front page of the *Summerfield Sun*.)

¹³ *Summerfield Sun*. October 16, 1903.

¹⁴ The February 17, 1905 edition of the *Summerfield Sun* noted that the "Transue Bros. have been busy this week making sleighs. They have made and sold quite a number of them."

¹⁵ For additional historic context on blacksmithing and the development of rural farming communities in the nineteenth century, see: Aldren Watson, *The Village Blacksmith* (1968); expanded and republished as *The Blacksmith: Ironworker and Farrier* (New York: Crowell Publishers), 3 (citation references 1968 edition); Neil Dahlstrom and Jeremy Dahlstrom, *The John Deere Story* (Northern Illinois Press, 2005). For a similar small-town Kansas blacksmith shop, see Cuba Blacksmith Shop National Register of Historic Places nomination. On file with the Cultural Resources Division of the Kansas Historical Society.

¹⁶ *Summerfield Sun*. November 13, 1903 p. 4; November 20, 1903 p. 5; and January 1, 1905 p. 5 consecutively.

¹⁷ *Summerfield Sun*. March 24, 1905 p. 5.

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Transue Brothers Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Summerfield, Marshall County, Kansas

With the evolving and expanding variety of services offered, the Transue brothers saw a need to expand their workspace. A building to house a farrier's shop was added on the north side of the blacksmith shop in 1904. The previous building on the lot, the B. E. Root Harness shop, was demolished in February 1904 to make way for the new building. The *Summerfield Sun* reported that the farrier's shop was nearly finished by March of 1904:

Work has commenced on the building to be erected by the Transue Bros. just north of their blacksmith shop on the ground where the building formerly occupied by the B. E. Root Harness Shop stood. The building will be used by the Transue Bros. themselves as horseshoeing shop and will be built of sheet iron 40 ft. long by 23 ft. wide. This will make it much more convenient for the boys and will be a great improvement in the looks of that street.¹⁸

This building also had a forge and Walt Shaeffer was the farrier.

The Transue brothers did a substantial amount of business repairing wagon wheels. Early in the summer of 1905, an advertisement for the repair of wheels appeared:

TIRES SET QUICKER AND BETTER – And will run longer without loosening than is possible when set the old way. You will not be out of the use of your vehicle as it requires but a few minutes to do the work.

No Guess Work about it. No Burnt or Charred Felloe Surfaces to Wear Away and Loosen the Tire.

We set them cold on hard wood surface, no steam and water soaked felloes to shrink away and loosen the tires, no burnt paint to replace. With this machine we do not over dish and sprain the wheel.

The damage to your wheels by running them with loose tires for one day may amount to much more than the cost of setting them. Let us set them as soon as you discover they are loose, keep them tight and your wheels will last longer at less expense and with much less annoyance and chance of a break down or accident. We guarantee our work. Give us a trial. You are cordially invited to call and see the machine in operation. Transue Bros. – Summerfield, KS.¹⁹

They modified their business to meet shifting technology and consumer demands.²⁰ They were well prepared for the arrival of the first automobiles in Summerfield. In fact, the local newspaper credits George Transue with having the first motorcycle in Summerfield: "Geo. Transue returned home from Topeka, Kansas

¹⁸ *Summerfield Sun*, February 26, 1904, p. 1 and March 4, 1904 p. 5.

¹⁹ *Summerfield Sun*. June 16, 1905. p. 5.

²⁰ For additional historic context about early auto-related commercial development, see Elizabeth Rosin and Dale Nimz, "Roadside Kansas" National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form (draft), 2008. Kansas State Historic Preservation Office, Topeka, KS.

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Summerfield, Marshall County, Kansas

Tuesday afternoon and brought with him a motorcycle. This is the first machine of this kind to be brought to this city and it created quite a little excitement."²¹ A few months later, the newspaper reported: "We do not know anyone that gets any more enjoyment out of anything than Geo. Transue gets out of his motorcycle. It is about as smooth running as any machine we have ever seen and gets over the ground too."²²

Summerfield's residents had never seen this type of transportation that resembled a bicycle with a crude one-cylinder gasoline engine with pedals.

Early twentieth century editions of the local newspaper are a good measure of when automobile use became widespread. In 1910, advertisements for the Axtell Garage Company began appearing in the *Summerfield Sun*. They were selling and repairing Ford automobiles. (Axtell is located in Marshall County, approximately 20 miles southeast of Summerfield.) By January and February of 1911, the Obert & Bernard Garage advertised that they had moved their business and homes to Summerfield in order to "fix any make of automobile" and also to sell the Studebaker line of the Model E.M.F. "30" in 2, 4, and 5 passenger bodies.

Judging by the increase in newspaper accounts and advertisements, there was a substantial increase in the use of automobiles around Summerfield in 1911. When someone purchased a car or even made a trip by car, the story often appeared on the front page of the newspaper. For example, one account recalled, "Messers. George Transue, H. E. Adams, R.W. Nelson, and P.M. Bernard returned home Thursday afternoon from Kansas City, Mo. where they had been attending the automobile show there last week."²³ And, "George Transue and family drove over to Waterville in their car Sunday for a short visit."²⁴ Still other newspaper accounts told that the Transues often provided transportation to others rather than just for their own families.

This shift away from horse-drawn wagons toward automobiles can still be seen within the farrier's shop. Early in the twentieth century, the Transue brothers converted the shop into an auto repair garage by digging a pit along the center interior of the building over which automobiles could be driven. From the pit, a mechanic could service the underside of the car. Access to the pit is at the west end of the building. Cars could be driven through the building from the east and exit out the west without the need to back them out onto the street. The wood floor remains and surrounds the pit. The 1911 Sanborn map refers to this building as the "blacksmith auto repository".²⁵

The Transue brothers operated the business together until James' health failed in the 1930s. George bought out his brother's interest in the business and continued on his own until September 7, 1946 when the shop

²¹ *Summerfield Sun*. November 21, 1907. p. 8.

²² *Summerfield Sun*. January 23, 1908. p. 5.

²³ *Summerfield Sun*. February 23, 1911 p. 4.

²⁴ *Summerfield Sun*. March 23, 1911 p. 5.

²⁵ A newspaper article and photo in the *Summerfield Sun*, October 16, 1903, p. 6 does not indicate that the farrier's shop adjoining the blacksmith shop existed in 1903. The newspaper noted that by March 4, 1904, construction of the farrier's shop was almost complete. The *Summerfield, Kansas 1888-1988; The First 100 Years* book shows the farrier's shop in a 1911 photo. The 1911 Sanborn map also reveals this but the building is referred as the Blacksmith Auto Repository. 1911 is also the first reference made of the coal shed by Sanborn.

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Summerfield, Marshall County, Kansas

was sold to Dale L. Roberson.²⁶ Roberson had taken nine different shop classes at Kansas State University and worked as an apprentice for two years for no wages. After he returned from military service during World War II, he returned to Summerfield to work a few years for George Transue before buying the business. He went on sharpening plowshares until they became disposable. Like other long-time, small-town blacksmiths (such as the one in Cuba, Kansas), Roberson shifted to welding to supplement his blacksmith business. Some locals, including Roberson, can still recall stories and anecdotes about the Transue brothers. For example, Roberson recalls that the Transue brothers built the area's first merry-go-round and that folks from miles around enjoyed it. He believes the main pole from the merry-go-round was used as a stringer under the floor in the farrier's shop. The Transue brothers were also part of a local Fourth of July tradition. Early in the morning of each Independence Day to kick off the celebrations, the blacksmiths would "blow" or "shoot" the anvil, which could be heard for miles around.²⁷

Roberson continued with the business until the later half of the twentieth century and still owned the building until 2008. His nickname (Tinker) developed out of his habit of tinkering in the shop during the last several years he owned the shop. He sold the building to David and Liz Zahm with many of the original contents and tools inside.

Summary

The Transue brothers developed their business in Summerfield during a period of rapid community growth and changing technology. Their business and the buildings out of which they operated evolved to fit changes

²⁶ Roberson recorded his recollections of the blacksmith shop in a manuscript written in 1969. See: Dale "Tinker" Roberson, *The Blacksmith Shop: Summerfield, Kansas*. Manuscript. May 1, 1969. On file at State Archives and Library, Kansas Historical Society. (Call #: 978.1 - M35 Pam. V. 2. No. 2.)

²⁷ Blacksmiths have been "blowing the anvil" to celebrate for hundreds of years. Most accounts of this trick include setting an anvil on a hard, flat surface on the ground with the anvil positioned upside down. Anvils have a crevice on the bottom and when placed upside down, this crevice faces upward. The blacksmith fills the crevice with black powder, and then places another anvil on top of the first, this one being in the upright position with its crevice fitting on top of the other one. The blacksmith seals the two anvils with mud or caulking, where they fit together, to keep the explosion from going out the side. A fuse is installed and when the seal is dry, it is ready to shoot. See: Jerome Christian, "East Tennessee Crank-Up" at: <http://gasengine.farmcollector.com/print-article.aspx?id=35886>. See also: The Farrier and Hoofcare Resource Center Dictionary at: <http://www.horseshoes.com/glossary/a/glsra.htm>.

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**Transue Brothers Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Summerfield, Marshall County, Kansas**

in technology and to meet consumers' needs. The three buildings are nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for their association with the early commercial development of Summerfield and Criterion C as highly intact late nineteenth century Commercial-style buildings. The nominated property includes three functionally related buildings that were erected between 1898 and 1911: the blacksmith and wagon shop, the farrier's shop, and the coal shed. The period of significance for this property begins with the construction of the blacksmith shop in 1898 and extends to 1959.

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Transue Brothers Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Summerfield, Marshall County, Kansas

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**Transue Brothers Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Summerfield, Marshall County, Kansas**

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots One (1), Two (2), Three (3), Four (4), and Five (5) in Block Nineteen (19) of the original town of Summerfield, Marshall County Kansas.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property includes the parcels historically associated with the blacksmith and wagon shop and the farrier's shop.

PHOTOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Property: Transue Brothers Blacksmith and Wagon Shop
Location: 309 Main Street, Summerfield, Marshall County, Kansas.
Photographer: Sarah Martin, KSHS staff
Date: 27 August 2009

Digital Negatives are on file with the Cultural Resources Division, Kansas Historical Society, Topeka.

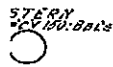
- Photograph 1: Overall view of Blacksmith and Farrier's Shops facing SW
- Photograph 2: East (front) elevation of Blacksmith Shop, facing W
- Photograph 3: West (rear) elevation of Blacksmith Shop, facing E
- Photograph 4: North (side) elevation of Blacksmith Shop, facing E towards rear elevation of farrier's shop
- Photograph 5: Interior view of blacksmith shop, facing W
- Photograph 6: Interior view of blacksmith shop showing trip hammer, drive belt, and east forge, facing S
- Photograph 7: Interior view of blacksmith shop of east forge and bellows, facing S
- Photograph 8: Interior view of blacksmith shop showing north wall and one section of overhead driveline, facing NW
- Photograph 9: Interior view of blacksmith shop showing front entrance sliding door, facing NE
- Photograph 10: Interior view of blacksmith shop showing window on north wall, facing N
- Photograph 11: Exterior overall view of farriers shop showing east (front) and north (side) elevations, facing SW
- Photograph 12: Interior view of farrier's shop, facing E
- Photograph 13: East elevation of coal shed, facing SW

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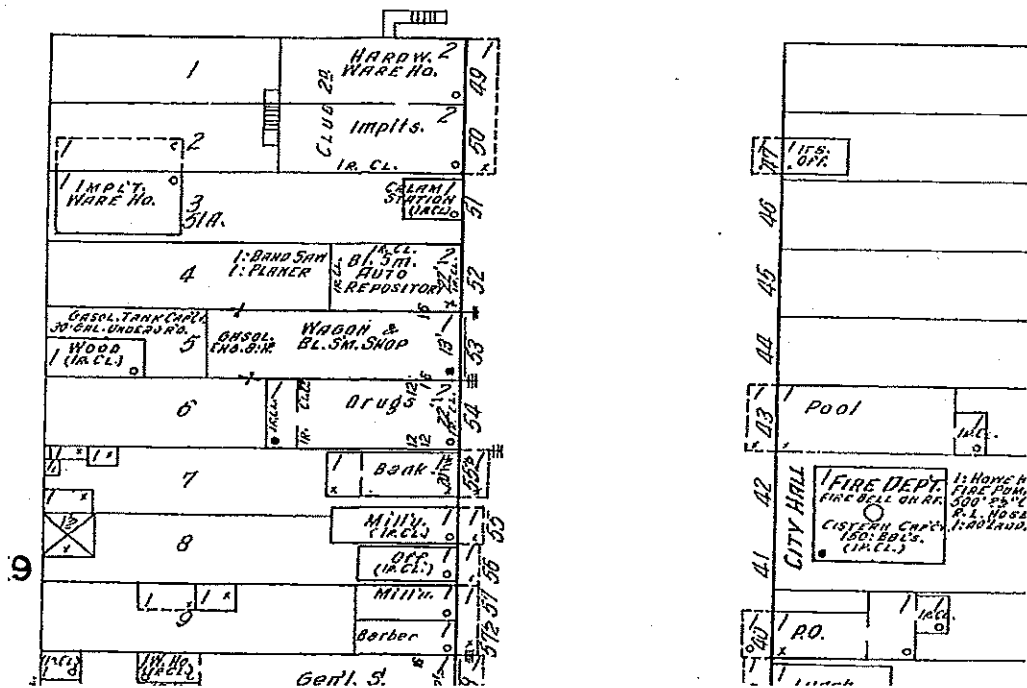
Transue Brothers Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Summerfield, Marshall County, Kansas

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BETHELL



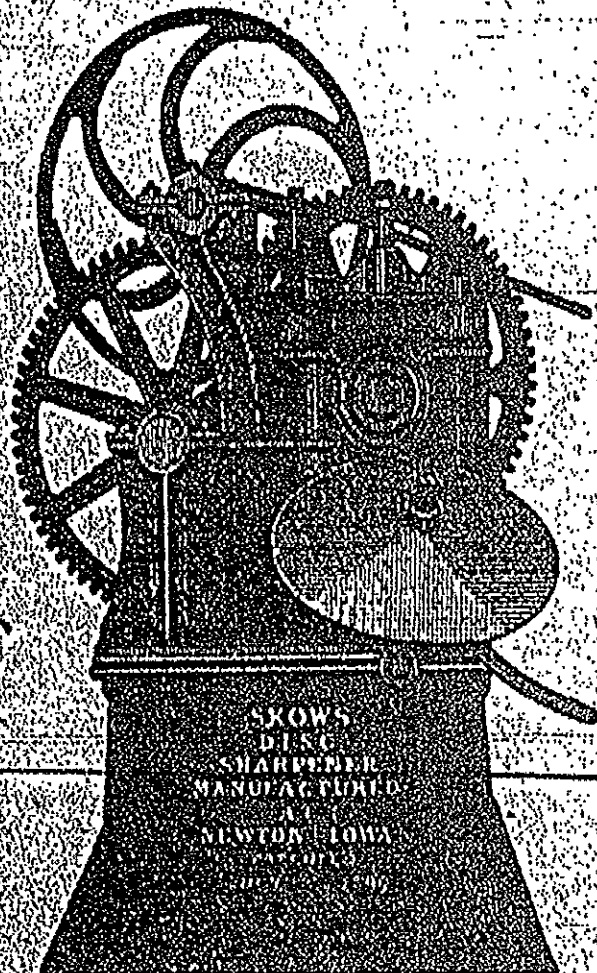
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1911 Sheet 1.

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National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

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Documentation

Transue Brothers Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Summerfield, Marshall County, Kansas



Do It Now!

Bring in your DISCS and have them Rolled COLD.

Our machine sharpens them well at a saving of the discs. Get them sharpened NOW before the spring rush starts in.

TRANSUE BROS.

SUMMERFIELD, KANSAS.

SKOWS
DISC
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MANUFACTURED
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MAY 7 1900

Summerfield Sun, Friday March 4, 1904 p. 4.

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Section number Add'l Documentation Page 15

Transue Brothers Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Summerfield, Marshall County, Kansas

**TIRES SET QUICKER
AND BETTER**

And will run longer without loosening than is possible when set the old way. You will not be out of the use of your vehicle as it requires but a few minutes to do the work.

No Guess Work about it. No Burnt or Charred Felloe Surfaces to Wear Away and Loosen the Tire.

We set them cold on hard wood surface, no steam and water soaked felloes to shrink away, and loosen the tires, no burnt paint to replace. With this machine we do not over dish and sprain the wheel.

The damage to your wheels by running them with loose tires for one day may amount to much more than the cost of setting them. Let us set them as soon as you discover they are loose, keep them tight and your wheels will last longer at less expense and with much less annoyance and chance of a break down or accident. We guarantee our work. Give us a trial. You are cordially invited to call and see the machine in operation.

Transue Bros.
Summerfield, Kansas.

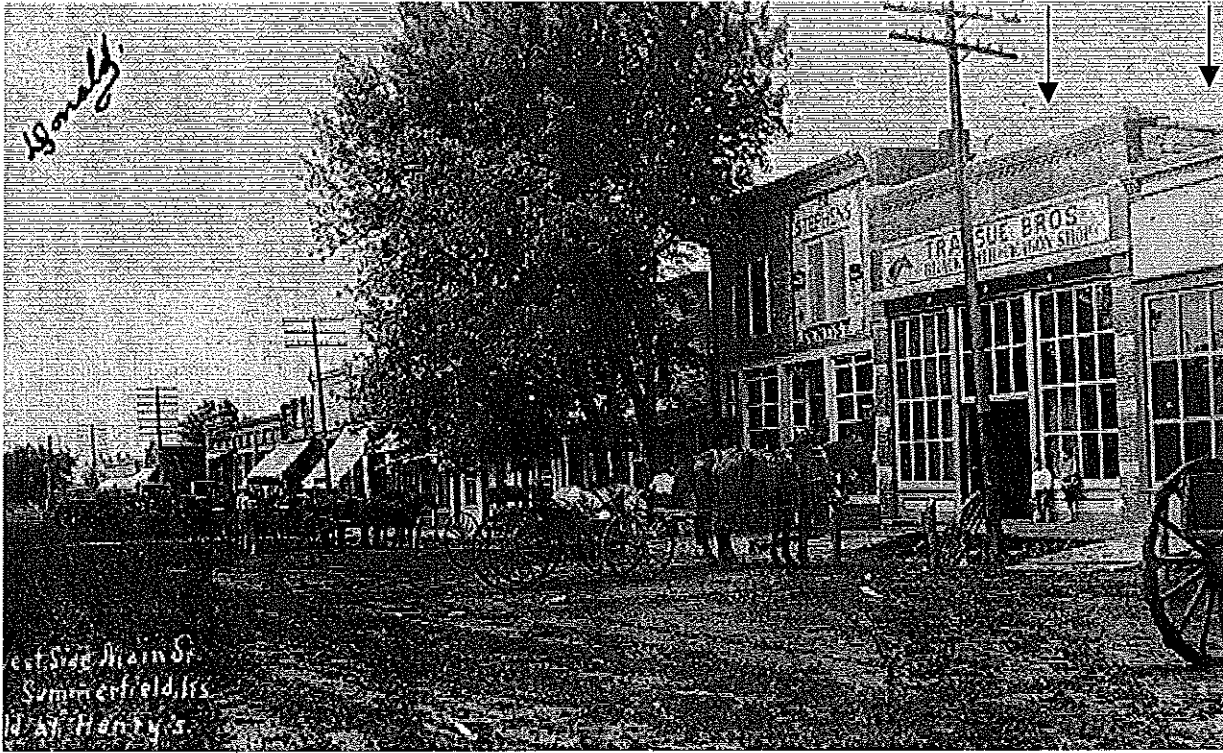
Summerfield Sun. Friday, June 16, 1905 p. 5.

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Transue Brothers Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Summerfield, Marshall County, Kansas



Historic Photograph of Summerfield's Main Street. Circa 1905.

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**Transue Brothers Blacksmith & Wagon Shop
Summerfield, Marshall County, Kansas**



Historic photograph of blacksmiths John Thomas Hutton and Walt Shaffer, date unknown.

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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

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Transue Brothers

Blacksmith & Wagon Shop

Summerfield, Marshall, Mo.

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